

gameinformer

Tiny Tina's Wonderlands

GET READY TO START
LOOTING IN 2022!

Xbox US
Playstation

Looking Back
Top 15 Games of 2020

Hades Review
The road out of Hell was
paved in early access.

November 2021



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Issue XXXI - Number 10 - Issue 234

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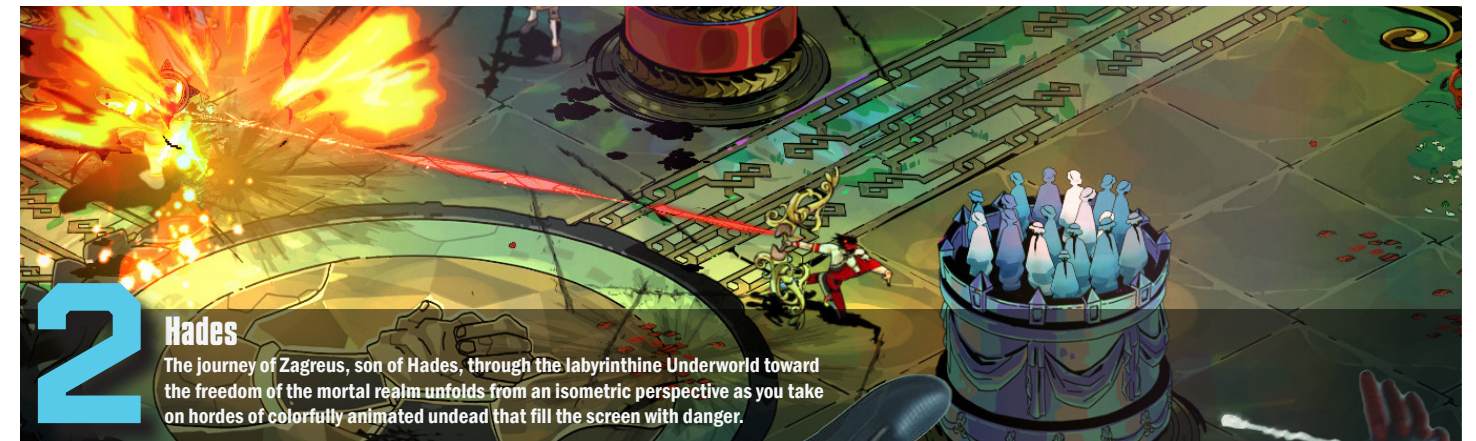
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14 Xbox Series X vs Playstation 5

If you're trying to decide between the PS5 vs Xbox Series X the thing you need to know from the start is that both Sony and Microsoft have pulled out all the stops to create the ultimate console this generation.



2 Hades

The journey of Zagreus, son of Hades, through the labyrinthine Underworld toward the freedom of the mortal realm unfolds from an isometric perspective as you take on hordes of colorfully animated undead that fill the screen with danger.



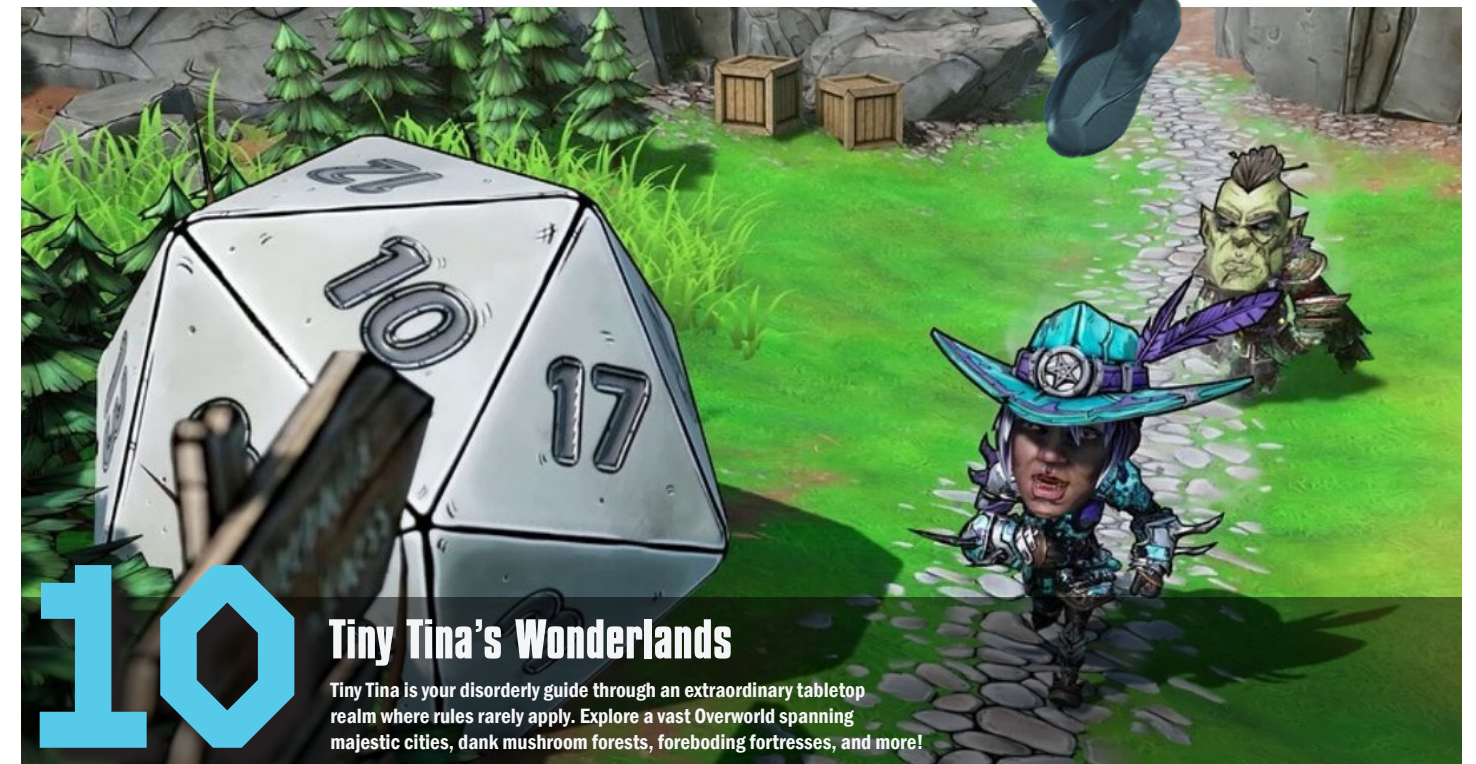
4 Final Fantasy 7 Remake

Final Fantasy 7 Remake has finally arrived, and it's definitely an experience that lives up to those years of hype.



5 Spider-Man: Miles Morales

Marvel's Spider-Man: Miles Morales doesn't quite reach the heady heights of 2018's Marvel's Spider-Man, but that doesn't stop it from being one of the best superhero games ever made.



10 Tiny Tina's Wonderlands

Tiny Tina is your disorderly guide through an extraordinary tabletop realm where rules rarely apply. Explore a vast Overworld spanning majestic cities, dank mushroom forests, foreboding fortresses, and more!

Top 15 Games of 2020

By Game Informer Staff | Oct 29, 2021, 11:47am EST

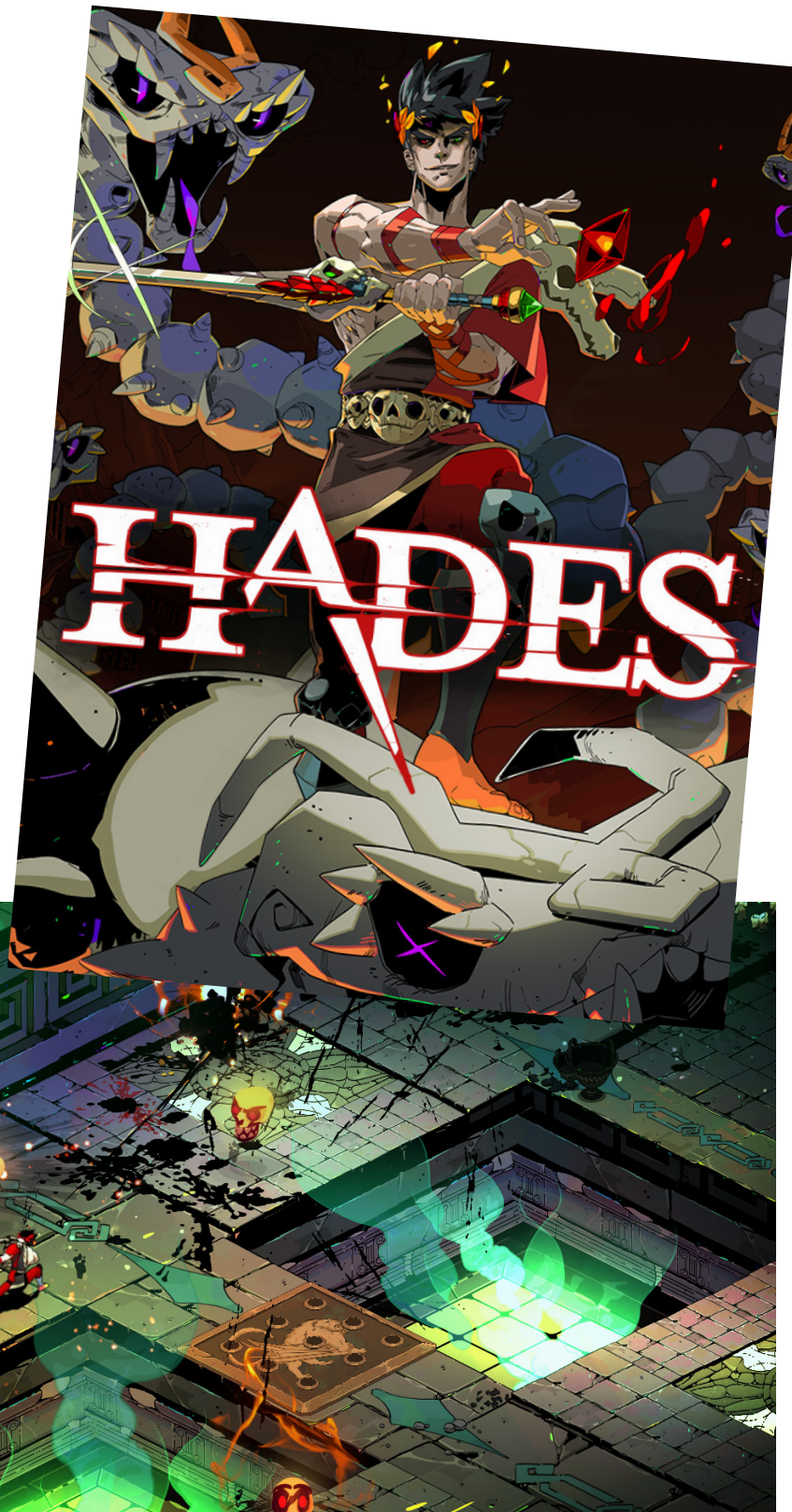
1. HADES

Hades is a classic coming-of-age story drenched in Greek mythology. The game tells the tale of Zagreus, son of Hades, who is making a break from the depths of hell in an attempt to reach the surface. Zagreus will end up dying dozens of times over your quest through the game, so you get used to the agony of murder real quick.

But despite the constant death and dunking by Zagreus' rude dad, Hades pulls off the fantastic feat of being kind, cozy, and welcoming. Sure, I got my face blasted off by the bone hydra and I'm still mad about the butterfly balls of Elysium, but I always had a soft place to land. The game removes the traditional barriers of a roguelike, easily giving the thrill of the genre to new players.

With a big cast of characters, most of whom are family, it's no surprise that things get increasingly complicated as you die, talk to your friends back home, buy a precious upgrade, and then die again. Up in the wilds of hell, you master new weapons and perfect your technique against impossible odds. When you get back home, you try to make things a little better for your friends and family. The two paths seamlessly mix together, creating an unforgettable campaign of struggle, despair, triumph, and satisfaction.

—Cass Marshall



2. ANIMAL CROSSING: NEW HORIZONS

Animal Crossing: New Horizons exploded after it launched in March. Thanks to the disturbingly good release timing, people were looking for ways to distract themselves from the grim realities of the coronavirus pandemic as well as ways to digitally gather. New Horizons provided both of those.

Whether it was fishing up big catches with your friends, perfecting your tarantula farming technique, or playing the turnip stalk market, it seemed like the game had something for everyone. People who had never played video games before were picking up New Horizons to bond with their friends and family, and they were finding enjoyment in something new and refreshing.

Being honest, at one point, New Horizons was the main drive for me to get out of bed in the morning. I wanted to grab my Switch and check in on my island to see what had changed overnight. Maybe I had a special visitor, or maybe my shop had some new furniture I was looking for.

—Julia Lee

3. MICROSOFT FLIGHT SIMULATOR

Microsoft Flight Simulator relies on a staggering amount of artificial intelligence and data, whether it's in the photogrammetry process used to generate photorealistic cities from 3D Bing Maps data; the AI technology used to generate the rest of the planet from 2D imagery; the real-time flight and weather information used to populate the game world; or Microsoft's cloud computing platform, Azure, which processes all of this data and streams it to your gaming PC over the internet. It's an incredible piece of software that likely wouldn't have been possible even five years ago.

And yet, none of the words in that paragraph I just wrote can convey the capacity of Microsoft Flight Simulator to bring all of that technology to bear in the most breathtaking ways. Game developer Rami Ismail took a trans-Atlantic trip from Montreal to Amsterdam while flying that same route in the game; his simulated flight landed about four minutes ahead of his real-life one, and the weather, the stars in the sky, and the sunrise all matched. I nearly brought my wife to tears by pausing a flight over Tokyo and positioning the drone camera to match the view from the hotel we stayed in during our fall 2019 honeymoon. No one knows when international travel will be a thing again, but until then, I'm grateful that it still exists in Microsoft Flight Simulator.

—Samit Sarkar

“When aviation lovers needed it most, Microsoft Flight Simulator landed on our PCs.”





4. FINAL FANTASY 7 REMAKE

I didn't get my hopes up watching the trailers for *Final Fantasy 7 Remake*. It had been so many years since I last played the original game ... so many years since I watched my Blu-ray copy of *Advent Children Complete*, a film that I stubbornly maintain "is good." Could this shiny new game really have anything to add?

WELL. In a word, yes. FF7 Remake isn't just a fresh coat of paint on a nostalgic property. Each area of Midgar is so thoughtfully detailed and designed; the architecture tells me clearly what living in each sector is like. And the massive plate that looms over Sector 7! It's one thing to know it's there, another to see it. It's got dangling wires, and crumbling edges where Shinra has given up on maintenance. After the plate fell, I looked up from Sector 5 and saw the slice of dirty sky where the Sector 7 plate used to be. Owie!

FF7 Remake is quirky and funny, too. It didn't matter that I had seen it memed to death; I shrieked with delight when Cloud had a dance-off against Andrea Rhodea at the Honey Bee Inn. It's one of many welcome updates, for me at least, that makes Remake more comforting to come back to than the original game.

—Simone de Rochefort

5. KENTUCKY ROUTE ZERO

Kentucky Route Zero's final chapter came out in January 2020, but Cardboard Computer's haunting point-and-click adventure is not exactly a 2020 video game. *Kentucky Route Zero* has five acts, the first of which was released in January 2013. So much has changed between 2013 and 2020, and *Kentucky Route Zero's* snapshots of human life serve as a surreal record of the economic strife that has beset the working class in the United States since the 2008 economic recession.

The game meanders through its strange and supernatural tale of a truck driver trying to make a final mysterious delivery. According to video game logic, the delivery should be the endgame, the whole point of the journey. But as the game goes on, it becomes clear that this is not a story about ticking off quest markers. It is about failure, about the ghosts we leave behind, and the tortured projects that we begin and never manage to complete.

—Maddy Myers



6. SPIDER-MAN: MILES MORALES

2018's *Spider-Man* was great, but it failed to establish Peter Parker's role in the fabric of the city. *Spider-Man: Miles Morales*, on the other hand, is Spanish Harlem. His story, identity, and reason for putting on the mask are all in service of the neighborhood he represents. His roots tie him to a time and place that need his version of the hero to hold it together. Throughout *Spider-Man: Miles Morales*, we get to see him grow into a defender who doesn't save New York City as the hero of some sort of monolithic location, but as the hero of a specific ZIP code.

He gains the trust of his neighbors, eats empanadas and pasteles from a nearby restaurant, and desperately struggles to save his local bodega's cat. His acts may feel small compared to the world-shattering events the Avengers might be mixed up in, but to the folks he shares a block with, these problems are their entire world.

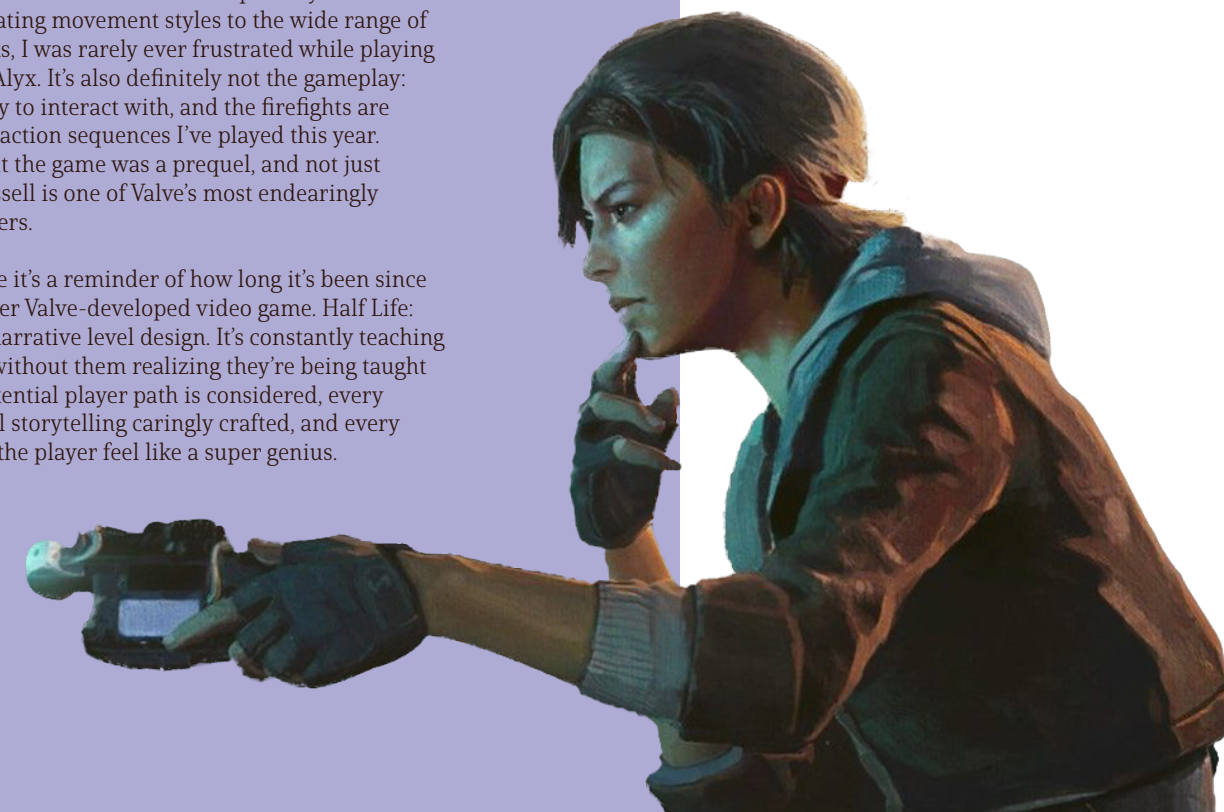
—Jeff Ramos

7. HALF LIFE: ALYX

Half Life: Alyx makes me frustrated. No, it's not because it's a virtual reality game. In fact, the VR implementation is done exquisitely. From the accommodating movement styles to the wide range of compatible headsets, I was rarely ever frustrated while playing (or wanting to play) *Alyx*. It's also definitely not the gameplay: The physics system is a joy to interact with, and the firefights are some of the most intense action sequences I've played this year. I wasn't even annoyed that the game was a prequel, and not just because your co-pilot Russell is one of Valve's most endearingly written and acted characters.

No, I'm frustrated because it's a reminder of how long it's been since we've experienced a proper Valve-developed video game. *Half Life: Alyx* is a master class in narrative level design. It's constantly teaching the player new concepts without them realizing they're being taught something new. Every potential player path is considered, every vignette of environmental storytelling carefully crafted, and every puzzle designed to make the player feel like a super genius.

—Clayton Ashley



8. CRUSADER KINGS 3

Terrible kings, vengeful cousins, and medieval kingdoms — *Crusader Kings 3* is a wonderfully dense game that rewards patient players. A player selects a kingdom, duchy, or region around the world during the medieval era. From there, they take control of that region's ruler, and begin the complicated business of running a kingdom.

Setting taxes, choosing advisers, and controlling armies can be satisfying, but the real lure of *Crusader Kings 3* is the elaborate interpersonal drama the game creates. The player manages their ruler's relationship, and eventually takes the role of their heir. Every member of your court, every adviser, is an NPC liable to generate chaotic narratives that threaten your reign.

It's like a feudal version of *The Sims*, with seduction, coups, assassinations, childhood bullies, and affairs. The game is also flexible, allowing a custom character creator and the ability for players to switch the historical norms on issues like sexuality and religion, which adds an extra layer of intrigue for people who want to craft their own stories.

—Cass Marshall

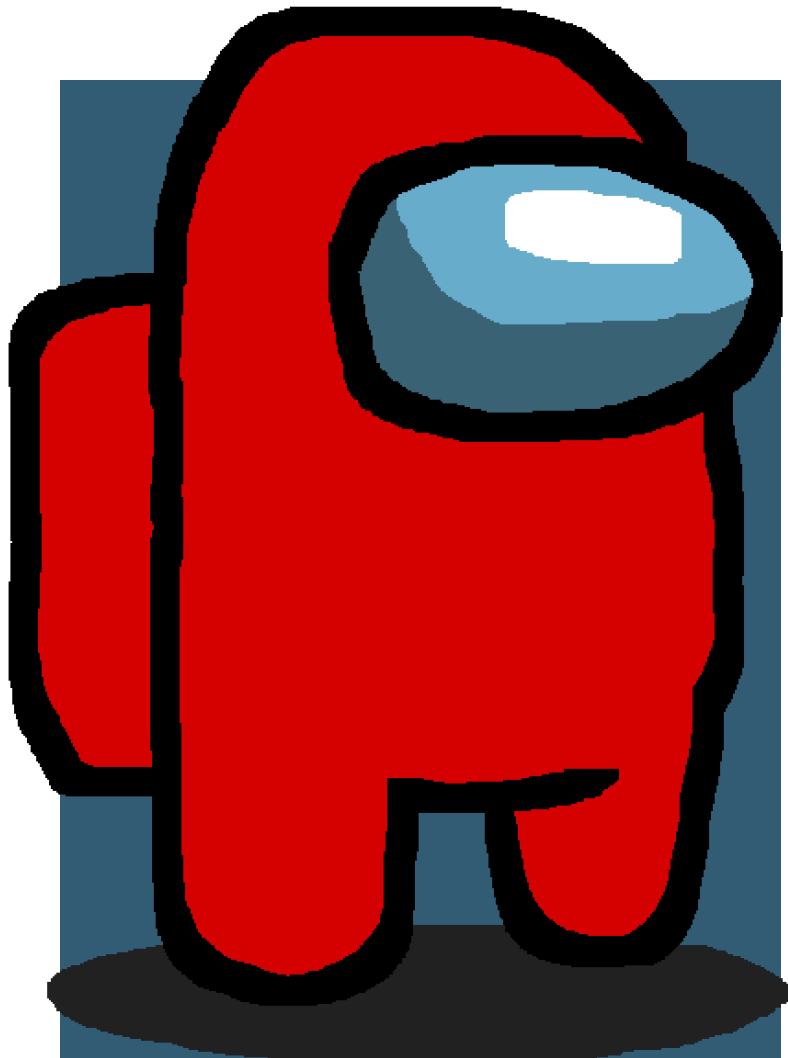
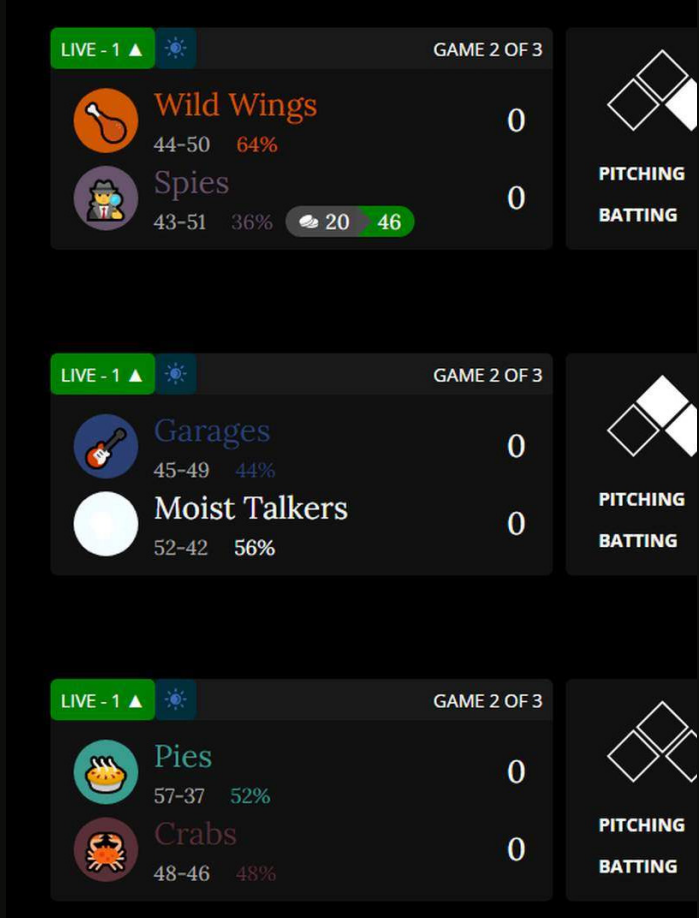


9. BLASEBALL

I am one of the many who have never particularly gotten into watching sports. I participated in athletics when I was younger, but it was never the team-based stuff people enjoy watching and talking about. My introduction to *Blaseball* was my friend messaging me on Steam asking, "What *Blaseball* team did you pick?" as if I was supposed to know what that meant, with no context. I hastily logged into the provided link and picked the Baltimore Crabs, as that's my local team. (I'm also a Cancer, so ...) From there, things spun out of control very quickly.

I became addicted to *Blaseball*, and not even the gambling aspect of it. I was addicted to the absurdity. I forced all my friends to play *Blaseball* and pick teams, and we'd spend the day smack-talking each other and talking about the games. For the first time in my life, I was talking about sports. "That sucks that York Silk got trapped in a giant peanut shell," I'd say to my friend, as if that's a completely normal thing to say out loud.

—Julia Lee



10. AMONG US

Among Us is an incredibly simple game, yet no two rounds are the same. Up to 10 players all head into space, where a band of beans serving as crewmates on a station or ship have to work together to complete a variety of tiny tasks. The problem is that one to three of those crewmates are hidden impostors, who have the ability to sabotage the station and murder their comrades. When a player discovers a body or hits an emergency meeting button, everyone gathers together to try and uncover the truth, and it inevitably goes wrong.

Every round is a slow burn, as the crewmates are slowly eliminated by sneaky impostors, who then turn around and try to frame the innocent crew. Players fling accusations back and forth, proclaim their innocence, and launch suspects into space.

Despite launching in 2018, *Among Us* rose to prominence on Twitch during the 2020 quarantine after the developers released two new maps. Since then, the tiny indie game has become a household name, even being used as a public outreach tool by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Canadian New Democratic Party leader Jagmeet Singh.

—Cass Marshall

11. SPELUNKY 2

I spent an astonishing number of hours playing *Spelunky HD*, easily several hundred. Even though it's seven years old at this point, I can go back and pick it up like riding a bike. I thought, Bah, *Spelunky 2* will be a breeze, right?

Turns out someone (ahem, Derek Yu) thought it would be a great idea to make *Spelunky 2* even more punishing than its predecessor. And yet, there's something far more welcoming about this sequel, and far more ambitious.

Thanks to its emphasis on exploration (with multiple pathways through the main game and a hidden background layer to delve into), I'm still stumbling upon wild secrets and incredible surprises in *Spelunky 2*. I'm more than happy to throw myself into the wood chipper if I feel like there's a chance I can see something new each time I play.

As for "beating" the game? Nope, the true ending still eludes me. But, as they say, it's about the journey.

—Russ Frushtick



12. IF FOUND...

If Found... is a quiet game that makes a good case for playing with the Switch docked to the TV. It's a visual novel where the cursor is an eraser. The only way to progress is to wipe away the beautiful illustrations and notes in the main character Kasio's journal, which recounts a trip home to Achill Island, the isolated place where she grew up.

And so it would be reasonable to assume that If Found... is a perfect handheld game for players on Switch. Instead, I blasted it onto a 55-inch TV and fell into its gorgeous details. I love the rough edges of my eraser, and the slight animations on some of the illustrations. I love the contrast of the simpler pencil sketches with the glittering planets and stars of the game's outer space B-plot, and I love wiping away one background to reveal a brighter one, swallowing up my living room. If Found... is a little game that deserves to be appreciated on a big canvas.

—Simone de Rochefort

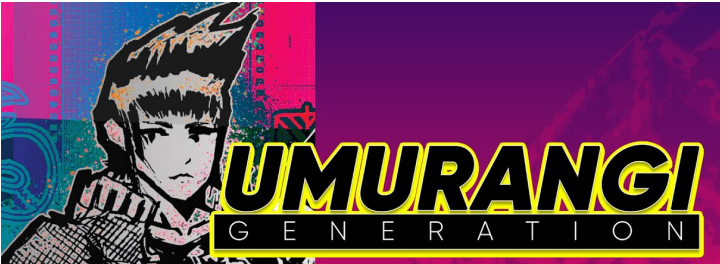


13. VALORANT

Building a game from the ground up to be a hardcore competitive shooter is generally a recipe for disaster. Even Rainbow Six Siege, the best-case scenario for games that aren't named Counter-Strike, took years to get good. So despite its sterling track record, Riot Games releasing something as immediately good and popular as Valorant was still a surprise.

With Valorant, Riot created a game with rock-solid shooting mechanics and a roster of characters that manages to make every match feel different, making for one of the most fun competitive multiplayer games released in years. Over the six months the game has been out, Riot has also proven that Valorant is built to last, translating the effective patch cadence, content updates, and open communication that has helped League thrive for over a decade. It's rare that you play a game and instantly know that it will be an important part of gaming for the foreseeable future, but with Valorant, that's exactly what happened.

—Austen Goslin



14. UMURANGI GENERATION

Umurangi Generation is a first-person shooter, but not in the way you probably expect. Instead of a gun, the player shoots photos “in the shitty future” with a camera. This shitty future is actually a catastrophic end-of-the-world scenario that’s played out in scenes in different levels of the game.

Created by a single developer, Naphtali Faulkner, Umurangi Generation, despite being set in a futuristic cyberpunk New Zealand, feels widely relevant to 2020, too. Its themes of unrelenting hopefulness and action between sights of impending doom are poignant, observed in these largely still worlds and told through posters, newspapers, and a shifting landscape. It's a game that surprised me; it feels so simple when it begins. Find and take a photo of a seagull. Take a photo of some markers. Find a roll of film. But those objectives — the photos you need to take — add up to so much more.

There's no dialogue in Umurangi Generation, but the game doesn't need it. Everything is already in the Māori sci-fi world.

—Nicole Carpenter

15. 13 SENTINELS: AEGIS RIM

13 Sentinels answers the question “what if somebody made the perfect spiritual video game adaptation of Lost and nobody noticed?”

You haven't heard of 13 Sentinels? I get it. I can't blame the majority of the English-speaking gaming community for overlooking the latest gem from Vanillaware. The studio releases roughly one masterpiece a generation, with Odin Sphere on PlayStation 2, Muramasa: The Demon Blade on Wii, and Dragon's Crown on PlayStation 3. Each game received reviews spanning the full critical spectrum, and none achieved mainstream success in the U.S.

Vanillaware exclusively makes imperfect games, creative larks that reach beyond the studio's comparably modest resources and the technological capabilities of the time, while succumbing to tacky fan service and narratological whimsies. But those flaws are a byproduct of an ambition rarely seen in the medium. I'm willing to compromise when the results are so refreshing....

—Chris Plante



Don't be the person that brings a veggie platter.

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Kyle Mikita
AVT 313 Editorial Design
Magazine Briefs
Professor Heffner

A large, detailed illustration of a dragon's head, colored in shades of blue and purple, with its mouth wide open. Tiny Tina, a small character with blonde hair, a red hat, and a white dress, is riding on the dragon's nose. She is holding a large, glowing torch in her right hand and a sword in her left. The background is a dark, swirling purple and blue.

Tiny Tina's Wonderlands

LAUNCHES MARCH 25, 2022!

Embark on an epic adventure full of whimsy, wonder, and high-powered weaponry! Magic, bullets, and broadswords collide across this chaotic fantasy world brought to life by the unpredictable Tiny Tina.

Roll your own multiclass hero and loot, shoot, slash, and cast your way through outlandish monsters and loot-filled dungeons on a quest to stop the tyrannical DragonLord. Join the party, throw on your adventuring boots, and be Chaotic Great!

AN UNPREDICTABLE FANTASY WORLD

Tiny Tina is your disorderly guide through an extraordinary tabletop realm where rules rarely apply. Explore a vast Overworld spanning majestic cities, dank mushroom forests, foreboding fortresses, and more!

GUNS, SPELLS, AND MORE

Blast baddies with powerful guns and devastating spells in frenetic first-person battles. Vanquish legions of enemies, including smack-talking skeletons, land-roaming sharks, and colossal bosses. Then delve deeper into dangerous dungeons for a shot at epic loot!

PARTY UP TO DEFEAT EVIL

Joining you at the table are headstrong captain Valentine and rule-obsessed robot Frette. During your quest to defeat the Dragon Lord, you'll meet a cast of lovable misfits like a lute-wielding Bardbarian and your very own Fairy Punchfather.

Who You Will Meet On Your Journey!

TINY TINA

Tiny Tina is the world's most dangerous 13-year-old. She loves bunnies, sugar, and weapons-grade explosives. As Bunker Master, Tina has created the entire Wonderlands as a magical playground to excite and delight her friends. Tina has offered one of her many bomb shelters (shelters for bombs) as refuge for Valentine and Frette, two space travelers who recently crash-landed nearby. In exchange for her hospitality, they need only play along...

BRR-ZERKER

Brr-Zerkers are tenacious Frost-infused bruiseurs who complement their firepower with an onslaught of brutal, up-close-and-personal melee attacks. When confronted with a problem, a Brr-Zerker's first instinct is to turn it into a popsicle and punch their way to a solution. Brr-Zerkers are hardy warriors who hail from the frozen mountains, with a long line of ancestors who trained their bodies to withstand and even harness the bitter cold of icy winters. In battle, Brr-Zerkers prefer to do their fighting up close and personal, taking point on the front lines as a whirling maelstrom of exceptionally chilly death.

Class Information

Brr-Zerkers are specialists of Melee and Cryo damage. The Brr-Zerker's otherworldly powers allow them to become Enraged via their Action Skills, channel the power of Frost through weaponry so that they may Freeze and shatter their enemies, and manifest an arsenal of raw destructive force. Brr-Zerkers are even able to channel their bloodthirst by leeching life from fallen foes using a dash of occult magic.

STABBOMANCER

Stabbomancers are sneaky, Critical-hit-focused assassins who summon magic whirling blades to the battlefield and disappear into the shadows at will. Look, Stabbomancy isn't really its own school of magic—it's a way of thinking. Specifically, "How do I stab that guy?" Up close with a dagger in the dark? A well-aimed bullet from afar? Or even an ethereal psychic ghost sword? The thing is, Stabbomancers are all about creating, and capitalizing on, opportunities. Jacks of all trades, masters of none, the skillful Stabbomancer exploits foes' weaknesses to stealthily strike vital targets to bring enemies down before they know what hit them.

Class Information

The Stabbomancer specializes in Critical Hits and Status Effects. They're able to keep enemies guessing by alternating between Guns, Melee Weapons, and Spells, all the while moving in and out of stealth to score guaranteed Critical Hits. Though fragile, the Stabbomancer can use their superior speed to evade damage and fire their guns while sprinting.



All About Tiny Tina's Wonderlands!



OVERWORLD

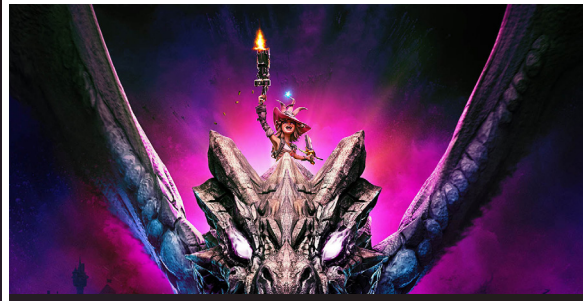
Feast your eyes on the Overworld, Tina's painstakingly crafted representation of the Wonderlands in tabletop form! Bask in the beauty of those rolling hills, majestic mountains, individually painted trees, and tiny breakable crates. Nevermind any half-eaten cheese puffs, exposed bits of styrofoam, or willy-nilly pushpins—those are all crucial to the structural integrity of the game board. They're not improvised materials, they're immersion! The Overworld is an expansive map that connects the many hotspots of the Wonderlands. When you're not engaged in first-person combat or exploring new areas up close, you'll get a third-person, bird's-eye-view of the land in the Overworld, complete with your Fatemaker looking like the coolest bobblehead there ever was. Handle with care, as there's no telling what Tina will do if you break one of her oh-so-precious miniatures. If you dare to venture off the beaten path in the Overworld, you can find all kinds of goodies, including extra chests full of gold, hidden collectibles like Lucky Dice and pieces of buff-granting Shrines, and even entirely optional areas with their own questlines. But watch out, because you might catch the attention of an enemy itching for a random encounter! If you're not in the mood to fight, you can simply run away or punch out your attacker before they reach you, but there's loot to be had if you bravely choose to fight the random encounter head-on.

MELEE COMBAT

Sometimes, enemies will rush right at you before your guns and spells can get the job done. Or perhaps you just feel the need to get directly in your enemy's grill for some good old-fashioned stabbing, or slicing, or bashing, or walloping, or—you get the idea. You always have room for a dedicated melee weapon in your inventory, and though you likely won't be swinging your close-quarters armaments around as your primary source of damage, melee attacks can be extremely useful in a pinch. Melee damage is meant to complement your firearms and spells, not replace them.

SPELLCASTING

Spells have wildly varying properties, even when they're the same basic type such as a fireball, magic missile, summoned hydra, or a gigantic meteor conjured from thin air to rain celestial destruction on your foes. You might find a spell that has multiple charges, allows for continuous casting (perfect for poison beams of death), or resets its own cooldown on a critical hit—and that's just the start. Most spells involve some sort of elemental damage, while others are meant to provide more utility by protecting allies or debuffing enemies, for example.



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PLAYSTATION 5

VS



Xbox Series X



Xbox Series X vs. PlayStation 5: Specifications

The next-generation leap means all-new power under the hood, with Xbox Series X and PlayStation 5 pushing the limits of what’s on the market. Custom AMD silicon lies within both devices, promising flagship gaming performance, and elevating their respective console families with new features.

AMD technologies once again power the next Xbox and PlayStation, with standalone teams sectioned to deliver the brains of future machines. That rides on the new 7nm 8-core Zen 2 processor architecture, flanked by a Navi-based GPU, representing the pinnacle of AMD’s recent PC developments at the price point. Microsoft and Sony also have hardware-accelerated ray tracing support, made SSD storage the standard, and used GDDR6 memory as RAM.

Our sources initially suggested Xbox Series X is expected to feature an eight-core Zen 2 CPU targeting 3.6GHz, bolstered by improvements to caching, new silicon architecture, and other proprietary optimizations. The actual

specs, as confirmed by Microsoft, were a bit better, with a CPU capable of running at 3.8GHz (3.6GHz w/ SMT). That helps Microsoft delivered upon the claimed four times increase over Xbox One X.

That pairs with its Navi GPU pacing 12 teraflops (TF) of computing power, compared to the Xbox One X’s 6TF setup. Microsoft’s GPU runs with 52 compute units clocked at 1.825GHz.

But that lays the foundations of one beastly machine, falling in line with PlayStation 5. That also saw Microsoft deliver a cheaper, mass-market alternative, Xbox Series S, while PlayStation 5 has a cheaper Digital Edition.

Sony also includes an eight-core 3.5GHz custom Zen 2 CPU, not too far behind Microsoft’s offering for Xbox Series X, alongside a 10.28 TF GPU. Both consoles exhibit enormous gains over the current generation, and while the PS5 falls short in raw processing power, its speedy storage takes the lead.

Sony makes gains with its custom SSD setup, with support for standard PC NVMe drives for ultra-fast storage.

Those storage improvements will help cut load times and streamline performance across all titles, proving its secret weapon for the next generation.

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Xbox Series X vs. PlayStation 5: Which is best?

A game-changing year lies ahead, with two of the world’s biggest next-generation consoles now on store shelves, albeit with limited supply. While Microsoft provides a tower of power with its monolithic Xbox Series X, the PlayStation 5 pitches an equally compelling upgrade from Sony. We’ve wrapped up everything you need to know about the two next-generation titans and how they stack up.

As expected from any significant console refresh, Microsoft and Sony focused efforts on delivering flagship performance for their next-generation vision. Both consoles pack custom AMD silicon, based on leading Zen 2 processor architecture, alongside its latest Navi graphics cards. That duo lies at the heart of graphical advancements over Xbox One and PlayStation 4, pushing improved resolutions, frame rates, and overall visual fidelity. The Xbox Series X is the latest evolution in Microsoft hardware and monolithic design housing stacked internals inside. It’s a chunky box with added volume over previous Xbox One consoles, aiding a new single-fan cooling system, and drawing air up through the console. Sony has debuted a more abstract, two-toned design, wrapped in a white, winged outer casing. The difference is black and white (pun fully intended), but positions both as massive consoles compared to their predecessors. And don’t worry; both stand vertically and horizontally, ideal for your existing setup.

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The Xbox Series X and PlayStation 5 aim high, both capable of up to 8K resolutions or 120 frames-per-second (FPS) outputs. However, it translates to a 4K 60 FPS baseline, pushing the best 4K TVs for Xbox Series X. That helps elevate both consoles above current-generation solutions, with Microsoft specifically touting a “four times” power increase over Xbox One X. The consoles also feature hardware-accelerated ray tracing via their Navi GPUs, better simulating how light interacts with virtual objects.

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Xbox Series X vs. PlayStation 5: Games

With Xbox One and PlayStation 4 entering their final months in the spotlight, the value of a compelling game lineup has never been more evident.

The PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X, and Xbox Series S launched with admittedly weak launch lineups, making either console less compelling in their early days. Microsoft pushed its flagship, Halo Infinite, back to late 2021, relying heavily on third-party titles through the holiday. And while Sony had notable titles like Astro's Playroom and Spider-Man: Miles Morales, neither were genuine system sellers.

Microsoft's recent announcements suggest a bright future for Xbox Series X and Xbox Series S, with a string of new studios and projects now on the horizon. Upcoming titles include Halo Infinite,

Senua's Saga: Hellblade 2, Forza Motorsport, and Fable, with hopes these will join the best Xbox games. The company's recent acquisition of ZeniMax, including Bethesda and other high-profile teams, also means The Elder Scrolls, Fallout, and DOOM all join the Xbox family. And while many projects remain a little while out, the long-term value of its Xbox Game Pass subscription looks promising.

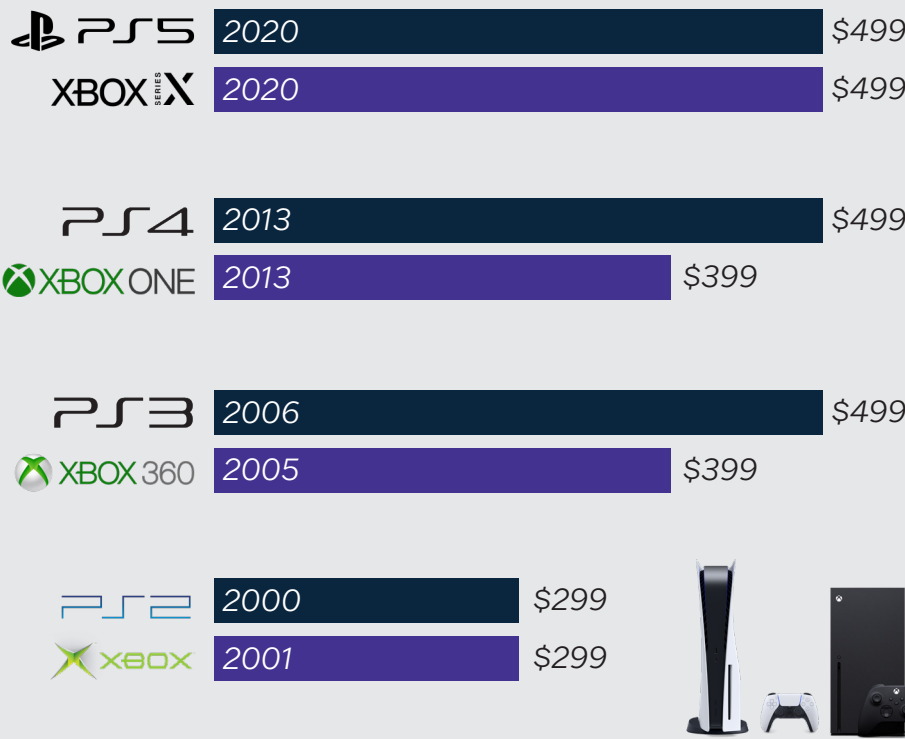
And for Sony, its creative collection has a lineup of varied projects on the roadmap for the coming years. The company has teased dozens of upcoming PS5 games through various events, including both in-house PlayStation Studios experiences and third-party aid. Horizon Forbidden West, Gran Turismo 7, and Ratchet & Clank: Rift Apart were among Sony's big unveilings.

Both Xbox Series X and PlayStation 5 will also benefit from third-party titles on the calendar, with dozens of enhanced titles in 2021.

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Historical U.S Launch Prices of PlayStation and Xbox Consoles



Xbox Series X vs. PlayStation 5: Price and availability in 2021

Both PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X retail for \$499 in the U.S., albeit with a cheaper PlayStation 5 Digital Edition in production, which cuts the price to \$399.

The new Xbox and PlayStation consoles are hard to find in early 2021, with limited supply and record demand fostering a challenging landscape for buyers. Recent restocks continue to sell out in seconds, with a thriving resell market valuing the consoles with high price markups. That's expected to continue throughout the year, only worsened by current world events.

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